



Thrift Store Volunteer Orientation

Thank you for your interest in volunteering for the Rolling Readers Thrift Store.

We know that your time is valuable and we're grateful that you have chosen to spend time helping us with our store. The proceeds from this store help to support our important reading programs.

Thrift stores are fun because you never know what you may find. The Rolling Readers thrift store is especially fun because our staff and volunteers are some of the nicest people in the world.

Before you begin there are a few things we would like you to be familiar with.

Customer service

We are a new shop and looking to build a broad customer base as well as an A+ reputation within the community. We want everyone who comes to our shop (including you) to have a positive experience; one that will make them want to return.

Greet everyone who enters the shop with a friendly hello or good morning/afternoon. Introduce yourself to customers and get to know their names. Not only will this make our customers feel welcome, it will let them know that we are aware of them and deter potential shoplifters. (More on that later)

Make customers aware of any special offers or sales that are in place.

Ask customers if they are looking for anything in particular.

Offer your assistance **"Please let me know if you need any help."**

Thrift Store Tasks

There are a variety of tasks that are part of operating a thrift store.

Receiving and sorting merchandise

Not everything we receive will make it to the sales floor. However, when people bring donations, let them know how much we appreciate their help and **accept all items** with a smile. Refusing certain items may cause embarrassment and hurt feelings. We want any interaction with our store to be positive. Ask if a receipt is needed for taxes. If so, sign and date a receipt leaving it to the donor to list the items and the value. Donations will be taken to the sorting area to be looked over and separated into groups. You will be provided with gloves to wear while sorting donations.

Broken merchandise and stained or ripped clothing is to be discarded. Possible collector's items are to be put aside until they can be checked online for their true value. Other items are to be set aside for cleaning and pricing before being placed on the sales floor.

Please refer to the list of items that we **do not want**. If you come across any of these items they are to be included among the discards.

Cleaning merchandise

For the most part, the items we receive are sold *as is*. Glassware, pottery and other household items such as lamps and ceramic figurines can be wiped clean, tables and other furniture can be dusted. We need only do a superficial cleaning; enough to make merchandise appealing. Clothing will not be washed; therefore any soiled clothing will be discarded.

Pricing

When pricing merchandise check similar items in the store to come up with a reasonable price. If you are responsible for researching collectibles search e-bay and other online sources for the true value of special merchandise.

Once price is set, that is the price of the item. We do not bargain with customers. Our prices are already reasonable and the money is going to charity.

Running the cash register

The Rolling Readers thrift store accepts cash and local checks only.

If a customer is paying by check, record their driver's license number and expiration date on the front of the check. Place that information in our check log. The next time they come in and pay by check we can look up them up in the log.

Once transaction has been completed, give them a warm thank you and invite them to return often because *we are always getting new merchandise*.

Additional cashier responsibilities are listed under the section-Shoplifting

Sales

If you are on the sales floor use your customer service skills. Greet customers and ask if there is anything you can help them with. Help maintain the look of the store by dusting, rearranging merchandise and setting up attractive displays.

Shoplifting

Unfortunately shoplifting is inevitable. It may be kids on a dare or a person with a compulsion. Either way an occasional item will go out the door without being paid for. **You are not** to put yourself in harms way to stop a shoplifter from taking items that were donated at no cost to us.

This is where the importance of the greeting comes in. Not only are we a friendly bunch, we want people to know we are aware of them.

If someone is checking out and you see that they have one of our items but are not presenting it for payment, you may say something like “**will that be all today**”, “**are you still deciding about that purse?**”

If you see someone running out the door and you know they have something, simply let them go. In no way try to grab them or go after them.

Things you *can* do include:

Keep fitting room doors locked when not in use.

Watch for people with loose fitting or baggy clothes inappropriate for the weather or people who are carrying large bags, umbrellas, strollers, newspapers or other items that can conceal merchandise.

Watch the eyes of your customers. If someone is making direct eye contact, they either need your assistance or they are considering shoplifting. Either way that person should be addressed with “**is there something I can help you with?**”

Be familiar with store prices to prevent price swapping.

Know which items are on sale and which are not.

Check boxes and other containers at check out to look for “stowaways”.

General Information

You will never be asked to work in the shop alone. There will always be at least two or three people working in the store at one time.

When you sign up for a shift we ask that you sign up for a **minimum of three hours.**

If you are not able to show up for your shift, please give us as much notice as possible so we may find a replacement for you. Please keep in mind your cancellation effects others.

Dress in something comfortable and neat. We prefer no tee shirts with messages.

Remember that while you're volunteering with us you are representing Rolling Readers to the public.

Have fun! There will be lots of opportunities for you to contribute creatively. Maybe we have received a lot of *beachy* items and you have a great idea for an eye catching display. Maybe you are talented at creating attractive hand painted signs. You may come up with a terrific promotional concept. Whatever your talent is, let us know about it and we will be happy to have you put it to use in the store.

Thanks again for choosing to spend time volunteering in the Rolling Readers thrift store. We couldn't make a success of our store without you.